

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 203

By Yager

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Colonel Wiley Harris of Rhea County upon receiving the 2009 Distinguished Leaders Award from the Tennessee Farm Bureau.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to recognize those outstanding citizens who have dedicated themselves to enhancing the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable person who evinces the greatest integrity and probity in all his chosen endeavors is Colonel Wiley Harris of Rhea County; and

WHEREAS, for his exemplary service to the Tennessee Farm Bureau, Colonel Harris has been named the 2009 recipient of the Distinguished Leaders Award; he accepted this prestigious award at the Farm Bureau's recent annual meeting; and

WHEREAS, the Distinguished Service Award is bestowed upon those who are dedicated to improving rural life and agriculture in this great State; it is the highest honor given out by the Tennessee Farm Bureau; and

WHEREAS, the third of nine children born to sharecroppers Whit and Robbie Newman Harris, Colonel Wiley Harris grew up in a family that earned its living selling truck crops; and

WHEREAS, on September 3, 1954, Colonel Harris was joined in holy matrimony with Odessa Brady; and

WHEREAS, after finishing high school, Wiley Harris worked a variety of jobs, although he had a growing interest in truck farming as his parents did; and

WHEREAS, he began work as a postal carrier in Dayton, and he continued to serve with distinction in this job for thirty-three years until he retired in 1990; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Harris has always remained active in the agricultural community, serving in the Rhea County Livestock Association, as a charter member of the Tennessee Vegetable Growers Association, and on the Rhea Counting Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, Wiley Harris served with dedication as a member of the Rhea County Commission for sixteen years, holding the leadership positions of Chairman for two years and Chairman of the Budget Committee for eight years; and

WHEREAS, a capable and highly respected farmer in his community, Colonel Harris is known for his excellent cabbage crop, which he used to farm on forty acres of land; this crop now occupies about twelve acres, and Colonel Harris continues to raise a beef herd; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Wiley Harris began his service to the Rhea County Farm Bureau in the 1950s; since then, he has been active on both the state and national levels of the organization, serving on various committees and striving to develop better policies for farm and rural residents; and

WHEREAS, he was elected to the local Farm Bureau Board of Directors in 1968; in 1976, he was elected President, in which position he served with acumen and alacrity for ten years; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Harris is a faithful and longtime member of the New Union Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, the proud father of six children, Colonel Harris and his wife also cared for a foster daughter until she was married; and

WHEREAS, Wiley Harris is deeply admired by his sixteen grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Colonel Wiley Harris is a dedicated and valuable member of his community who works tirelessly with the Farm Bureau and other organizations to improve the quality of life for citizens of this great State; and

WHEREAS, for his many contributions to his profession, agriculture, and his community, Colonel Harris is deserving of the 2009 Distinguished Leaders Award from the Farm Bureau, and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we congratulate Colonel Wiley Harris of Rhea County upon his receipt of the 2009 Distinguished Leaders Award from the Tennessee Farm Bureau, commend him for his laudable and astute service to the good people of Tennessee, honor his myriad of accomplishments, and salute his unswerving commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.